



BARAGA COUNTY ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

2024 BARAGA COUNTY DATA BOOKLET

Presented by: Baraga County Economic Development Corporation



LAKE SUPERIOR COMMUNITY
PARTNERSHIP

Prepared by: Lake Superior Community Partnership



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BARAGA COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (BCEDC): 2024 ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

Introduction

Welcome to the Lake Superior Community Partnership's (LSCP) 2024 Economic Overview, Baraga County's foremost resource for economic development. LSCP provides a diverse range of affordable and effective services that empower growth and facilitate essential connections among businesses, organizations, leaders, and policymakers. LSCP is also a strong advocate for policies that reinforce our regional economy.

About This Report

This data booklet, developed with the assistance of the Lightcast Developer tool, combines information from over 90 federal, state, and private sources to offer a comprehensive view of Baraga County's economic landscape. By examining historical trends and employing predictive models, the report provides insights into past economic activities and forecasts for the future.

Using This Report

Updated annually with new data from Lightcast, this report serves as a crucial tool for businesses and community members seeking to track Baraga County's economic progress. Staying informed enables our partners to position themselves for future prosperity and economic success.

Using the Appendix

The Appendix offers additional resources for analyzing Baraga County's economic landscape in detail. It includes trends and projections that provide stakeholders with a more in-depth perspective on economic factors and equips them to make strategic, informed decisions for sustainable growth.

For questions or to obtain extra copies of this report, please contact LSCP at (906) 226-6591 or via email at lscp@marquette.org.



2024 POPULATION:

Baraga County: **8,383**

Upper Peninsula: **305,030**

Michigan: **10,047,636**

As of 2024, Baraga County's population is estimated at 8,383, marking the beginning of a projected decade of steady growth. Compared to 8,315 in 2023, this increase reflects early signs of a broader upward trend expected to continue through 2034.

This growth is fueled by several key factors. The county is benefiting from expanded economic opportunities, particularly in tourism and outdoor recreation, that are drawing new residents. The rise of remote work has also made it possible for more people to relocate in search of a quieter and more affordable lifestyle. At the same time, investments in community infrastructure and the development of affordable housing are making Baraga County increasingly attractive to families, retirees, and professionals alike.



2024 UNEMPLOYMENT RATE:

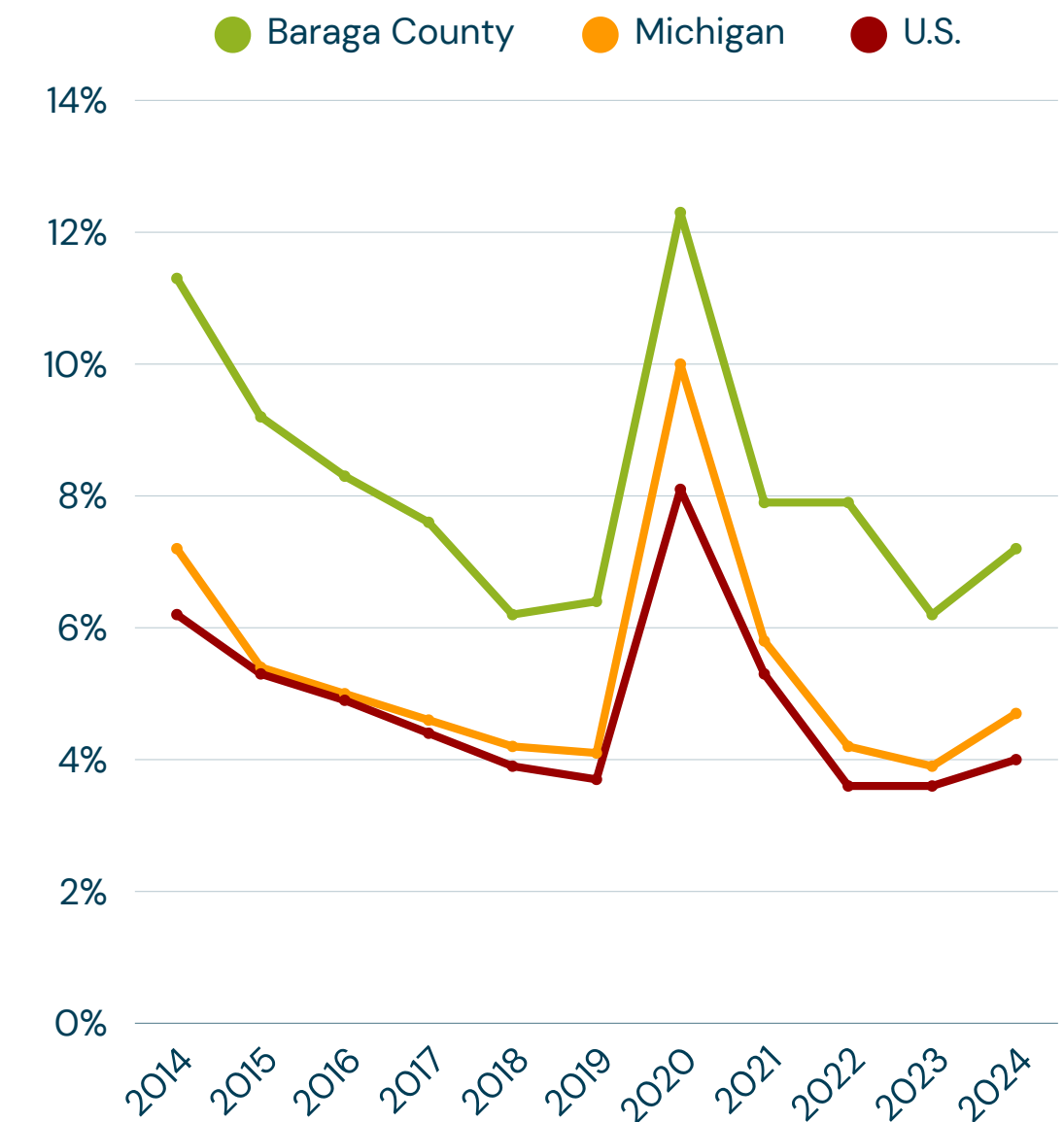
Baraga County: **7.20%**

Michigan: **4.7%**

U.S.: **4.0%**

In 2024, Baraga County's unemployment rate stood at 7.20%, remaining significantly higher than Michigan's state average of 3.80% and the national average of 3.60%. Despite continued recovery from pandemic-related disruptions, the county faces persistent economic challenges that contribute to its elevated unemployment levels.

Baraga County's economy relies heavily on seasonal industries such as tourism and natural resources, which often result in employment fluctuations throughout the year. A limited variety of job opportunities, combined with an aging population, also contributes to the region's workforce instability as younger residents relocate in search of broader prospects. Although the unemployment rate has improved from the peak in 2021, when it reached 12.30%, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are still being felt—particularly in the tourism and hospitality sectors—hindering full employment recovery. The current rate reflects both structural economic issues and the need for further diversification and investment in the local job market.





2024 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT:

Bachelor's Degree: **11%**

High School Diploma: **39%**

Graduate Degree and Higher: **5%**

In 2024, Baraga County's educational attainment continues to show a diverse mix among its residents. A significant portion, 39%, holds a high school diploma, while 11% have earned a bachelor's degree. Additionally, 5% of residents have obtained a graduate degree or higher. This educational profile underscores the ongoing need to expand educational opportunities and support workforce development initiatives within the county.

Top 8 Industries by Employment in Baraga County in 2024

In 2024, several industries stood out in terms of employment in Baraga County, reflecting significant economic activities and shifts within the region. Following is an analysis of the top eight industries by employment and insights into why these trends are occurring in Baraga County.



Top 8 Industries by Employment in Baraga County in 2024

A banner for the Government industry featuring a blue-tinted image of the Michigan State Capitol dome and several American flags flying in front of it.

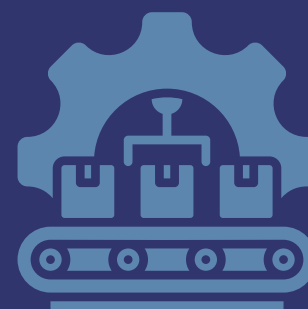
Government



Government employment remains the largest sector in Baraga County, with 1,595 jobs in 2024. This marks a 2.4% increase from 2023, adding approximately 38 new positions. Continued growth in this sector likely reflects expanded roles in public education, law enforcement, administration, and tribal government services.

A banner for the Manufacturing industry featuring a blue-tinted image of a worker in a white shirt operating a large industrial machine in a factory setting.

Manufacturing



Manufacturing employed 524 people in Baraga County in 2024, reflecting a decrease of about 5.6% from 2023. The sector shed approximately 31 jobs, potentially due to shifts in demand, seasonal slowdowns, or restructuring in wood products, paper production, or automotive-related industries. Despite the decline, manufacturing remains a core component of the county's economic base.

A banner for the Retail Trade industry featuring a blue-tinted image of several colorful shopping bags (red, white, and blue) stacked together.

Retail Trade



Retail Trade accounted for 186 jobs in Baraga County in 2024, reflecting a 14% increase from 2023. The sector added approximately 23 jobs, suggesting a rebound in local consumer activity and possible growth among small businesses, general merchandise stores, and fuel or convenience retailers. This uptick may also be tied to seasonal tourism or expanded retail services in the area.

A banner for the Accommodation & Food Services industry featuring a blue-tinted image of a variety of food items, including bread, cheese, and meats, arranged on a tray.

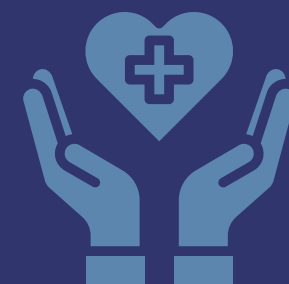
Accommodation & Food Services



The Accommodation and Food Services sector employed 165 people in Baraga County in 2024, marking a 13.8% increase from 2023 with the addition of roughly 20 jobs. This growth highlights the county's continued appeal as a destination for tourism and outdoor recreation, supporting restaurants, lodging, and seasonal hospitality businesses.

Top 8 Industries by Employment in Baraga County in 2024

Health Care & Social Assistance



Health Care and Social Assistance employed 111 people in Baraga County in 2024, reflecting an 8.8% increase from 2023 with the addition of about 9 jobs. This growth underscores the sector’s continued importance in delivering essential medical, behavioral health, and social support services to residents across the county.

Construction



Construction provided 106 jobs in Baraga County in 2024, reflecting a decrease of about 9.4% from 2023. The sector lost approximately 11 jobs, potentially due to a slowdown in new residential or commercial development, seasonal project delays, or the completion of major infrastructure work. Despite the decline, construction remains a vital industry for the local economy.

Other Services

(except Public Administration)



Other Services employed 91 people in Baraga County in 2024, representing a 7% increase from 2023 with the addition of about 6 jobs. This sector—covering personal care, maintenance, repair services, and nonprofits—appears to be rebounding, potentially driven by increased local demand and community-based service expansion.

Finance & Insurance



Finance and Insurance employed 85 people in Baraga County in 2024, showing a slight decrease of about 2.3% from 2023, with the loss of approximately 2 jobs. While the decline is modest, it may reflect shifting consumer habits, consolidation of services, or adjustments in regional demand for banking, investment, and insurance offerings.

Industries by Employment Conclusion for 2024

In 2024, Baraga County's job market demonstrated a mixed but generally stable outlook. Government continued as the top employer, maintaining steady growth, while manufacturing experienced a modest decline after recent expansion years. Finance and retail trade showed resilience with slight fluctuations, and tourism-related jobs in accommodation and food services saw notable growth, highlighting the county's ongoing appeal as a destination. Minor declines in construction and health care were offset by gains in other services, reflecting a balanced and adaptable local economy poised for continued stability.



Top 8 Industries by Gross Regional Product in Baraga County in 2024

In 2023, several industries in Baraga County emerged as leaders in Gross Regional Product (GRP), reflecting significant economic activities and shifts within the region. An analysis of the top eight industries by GRP reveals trends shaping the local economy, driven by factors such as population growth, rising consumer demand, and strategic investments. These trends not only enhance economic output but also create employment opportunities, contributing to the overall development and vitality of Baraga County.



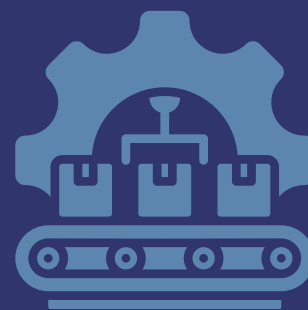
Gross Regional Product

Government



The government sector continues to play a vital role in Baraga County's economy in 2024, generating a Gross Regional Product (GRP) of \$130,028,234. Local demand for government services totaled \$383,444,697, with \$200,918,527 of that demand met through imports. Total sales in the sector reached an impressive \$616,111,822, of which \$467,702,359 were exported outside the region. These figures highlight the government sector's continued importance in providing essential services locally while also significantly contributing to the wider economy through regional exports.

Manufacturing



The manufacturing sector remains a significant component of Baraga County's economy, contributing \$76.3 million in Gross Regional Product (GRP) in 2024. Total demand for manufactured goods reached \$100.1 million, with \$96.4 million imported to meet local needs. The sector generated \$152.3 million in total sales, with \$148.7 million exported, reinforcing its position as a key exporting industry. Major contributors include wood products, which utilize the region's abundant timber resources; metal fabrication, which supports industrial and construction supply chains; food processing, adding value to local agriculture; and machinery manufacturing, providing specialized equipment for various sectors.

Wholesale Trade



The Wholesale Trade sector contributes \$42.4 million to Baraga County's economy. Total demand for wholesale goods is \$33.8 million, with \$39.0 million met through imports. Total sales in this sector amount to \$54.5 million, while exports total \$49.3 million, underscoring the sector's strong role in supplying goods beyond county borders.

Utilities



The utilities sector contributes \$17.2 million to Baraga County's economy through Gross Regional Product (GRP). In 2024, local demand for utilities totaled \$12.1 million, with \$11.7 million of that met through imports. Despite modest local demand, the sector generated \$24.6 million in total sales, with the majority, \$24.2 million, exported to other regions. This makes the utilities sector a strong net exporter, playing an important role in serving energy and utility needs beyond county boundaries.

Gross Regional Product

Retail Trade



The Retail Trade sector contributes \$16.1 million to Baraga County's economy in 2024. The total demand for retail goods stands at \$41.5 million, with a significant \$33.9 million met through imports, highlighting the sector's heavy reliance on goods from outside the county. Despite this, retail sales total \$24.9 million, with \$17.3 million coming from exports. This underscores the sector's important role in supporting both local consumption and providing goods to customers beyond the county limits.

Finance & Insurance



In 2024, Baraga County's Finance and Insurance sector generates a Gross Regional Product (GRP) of \$15.0 million. Local demand for these services amounts to \$47.8 million, with a large share, \$38.2 million, satisfied through imports. Despite this dependency, the sector records total sales of \$23.9 million, including \$14.3 million in exports. This reflects the sector's growing footprint in providing financial and insurance services both within and beyond the county borders.

Information



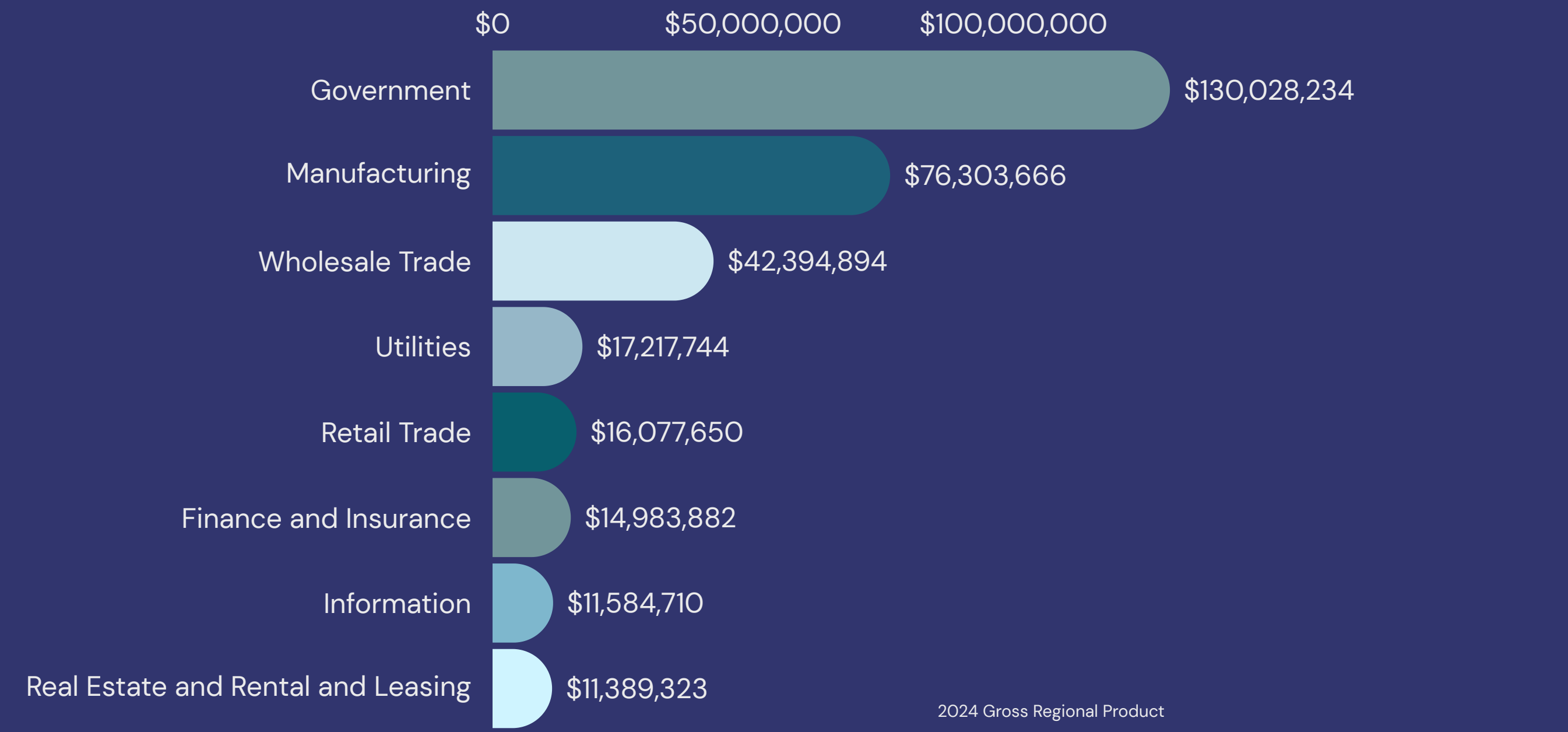
The Information sector contributes \$11.6 million in Gross Regional Product (GRP) to Baraga County's economy in 2024. Total demand for information services amounts to \$39.1 million, with \$30.9 million met through imports, demonstrating a strong reliance on external sources. Despite this, the sector generated \$19.8 million in total sales, with \$11.7 million exported beyond the county. This highlights the sector's role as both a consumer of imported information services and a provider of valuable outputs to markets outside the region.

Real Estate, Rental & Leasing



In 2024, the Real Estate and Rental and Leasing sector contributes \$11.4 million to Baraga County's Gross Regional Product (GRP). Total demand for services in this sector reaches \$22.3 million, with \$8.2 million met through imports. The sector generated \$24.2 million in total sales, including \$9.9 million in exported sales. This demonstrates the sector's balanced role in satisfying local demand while also actively participating in the broader regional economy through service exports.

Gross Regional Product



2024 Gross Regional Product



Housing

In 2024, Baraga County still faces housing challenges, with an estimated 40% vacancy rate, though most of those are seasonal homes, not available for year-round use. The actual housing vacancy rate for residents is likely under 15%, but the aging housing stock (much of it built before 1970) highlights the need for new, modern housing.

Efforts to improve housing stability include the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community securing funding to build energy-efficient homes for 20 families. Statewide, the Michigan State Housing Development Authority launched a Tribal Nations Housing Development Program to support tribal-led housing. Locally, the L'Anse Area Community Development Corporation continues working to accelerate housing development and attract investment.

Source: Second Wave Media. (n.d.). Baraga County homeowners get help with housing needs.





BARAGA COUNTY ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

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Appendix



Non-Farm Payroll Employment:

Year	Non-farm Payroll Employment	Change from Prior Year
2014	3,752	-219
2015	3,203	-549
2016	3,103	-100
2017	3,100	-3
2018	3,132	32
2019	3,233	101
2020	2,953	-280
2021	2,963	10
2022	3,026	63
2023	3,184	158
2024	3,208	24

**The U.S. Department of Labor Statistics implemented a number of methodological changes in the production of state and county employment and unemployment estimates. As such, some counties reflected larger than normal revisions to prior year estimates.*

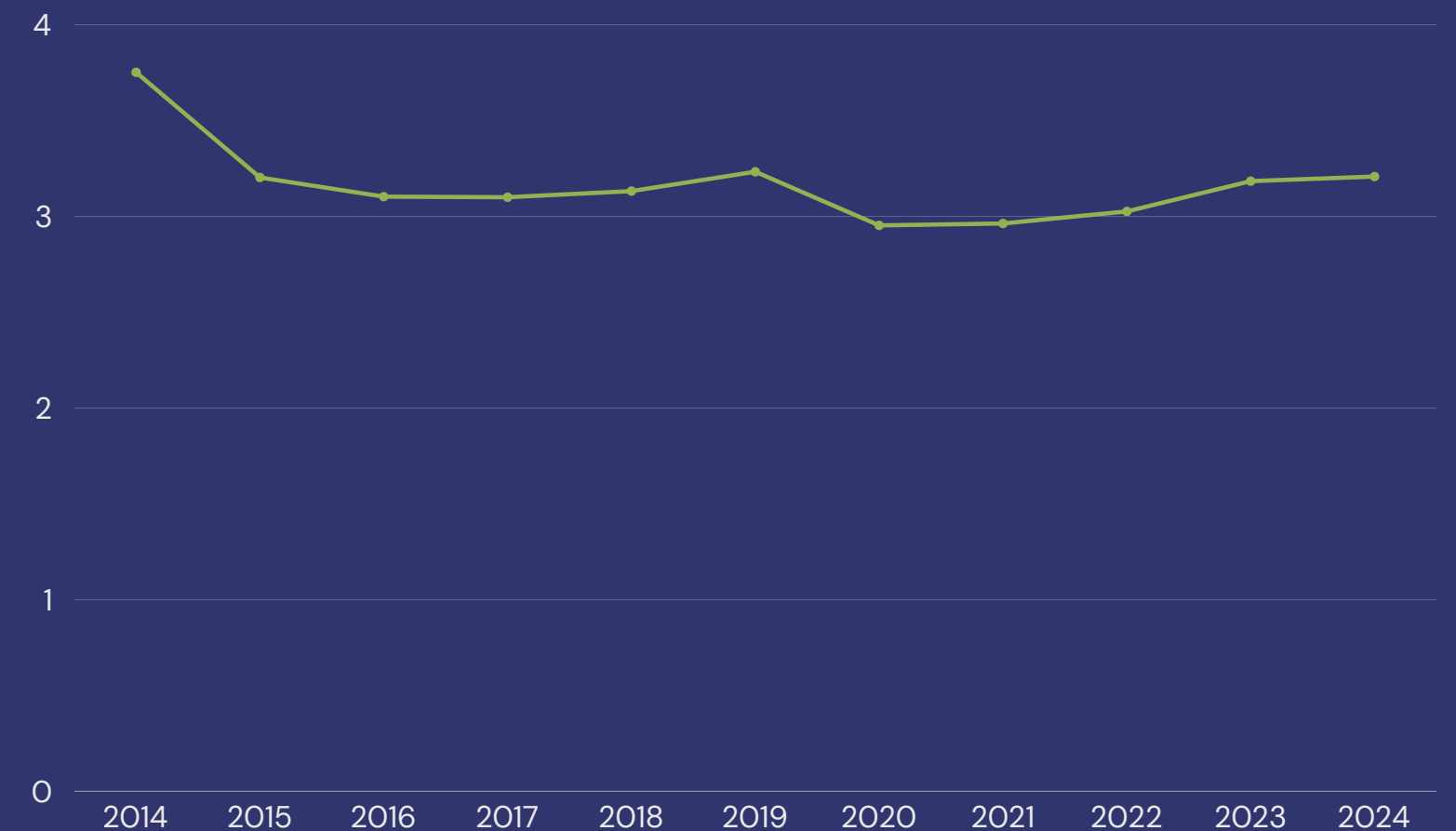
What it is:

The total number of jobs in the county, excluding farm work, unincorporated self-employment, and employment by private households, nonprofit organizations, the military, and intelligence agencies.

Importance:

Non-farm payroll reports indicate the economy's health by showing the number of new jobs added compared to the previous year.

Non-Farm Payroll Employment Trend



Unemployment Rate:

Year	Baraga County	Michigan	U.S.
2014	11.30%	7.20%	6.20%
2015	9.20%	5.40%	5.30%
2016	8.30%	5.00%	4.90%
2017	7.60%	4.60%	4.40%
2018	6.20%	4.20%	3.90%
2019	6.40%	4.10%	3.70%
2020	12.30%	10%	8.10%
2021	7.90%	5.70%	5.30%
2022	7.90%	4.20%	3.60%
2023	6.20%	3.90%	3.60%
2024	7.20%	4.70%	4.00%

Source: Michigan Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives.

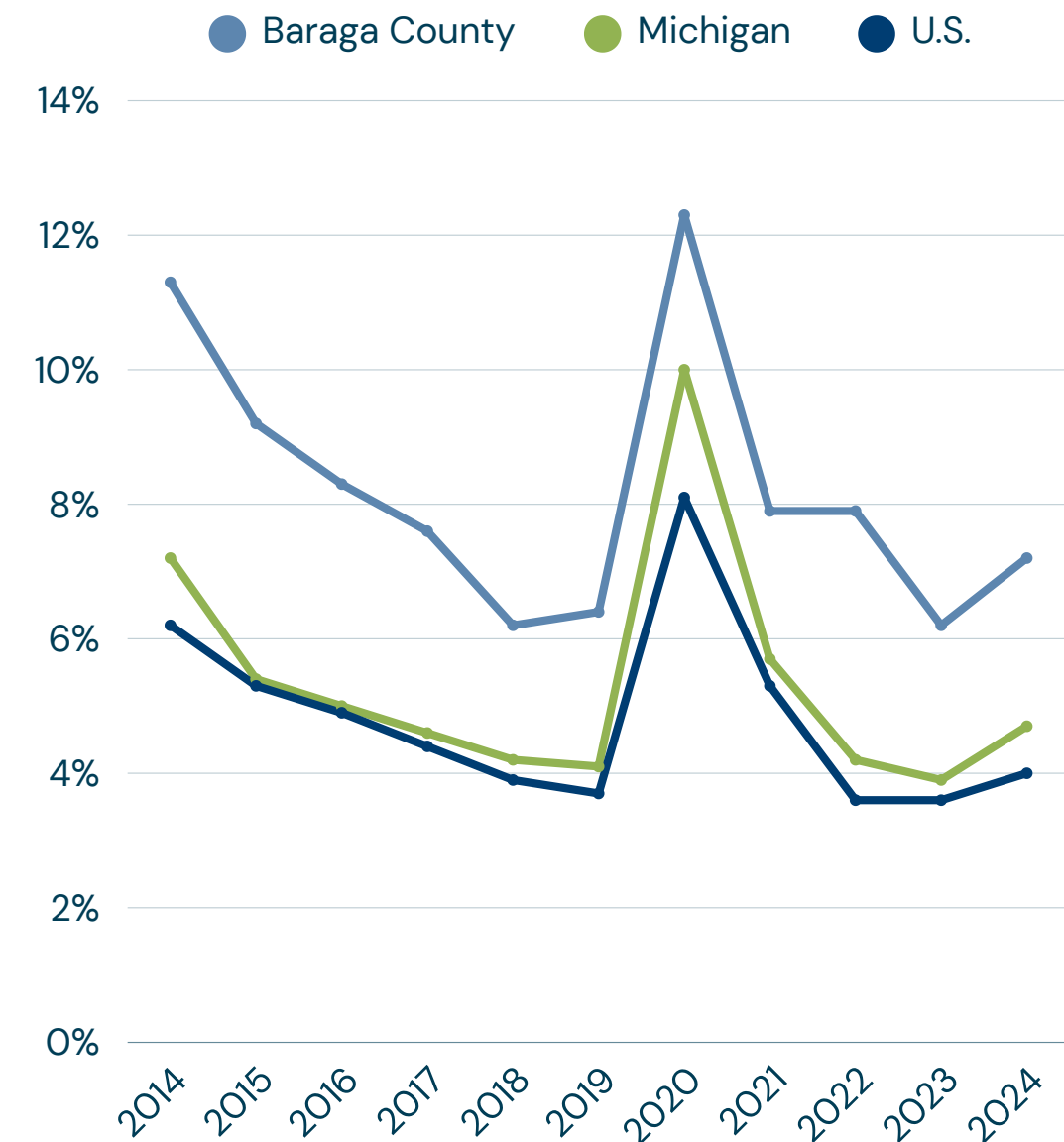
What it is:

The percentage of people without a job who have actively sought work in the past four weeks and are available to work.

Importance:

A lower unemployment rate indicates that more people in the county are finding jobs, signifying a growing regional economy.

Unemployment Rate Trend



Major Industries:

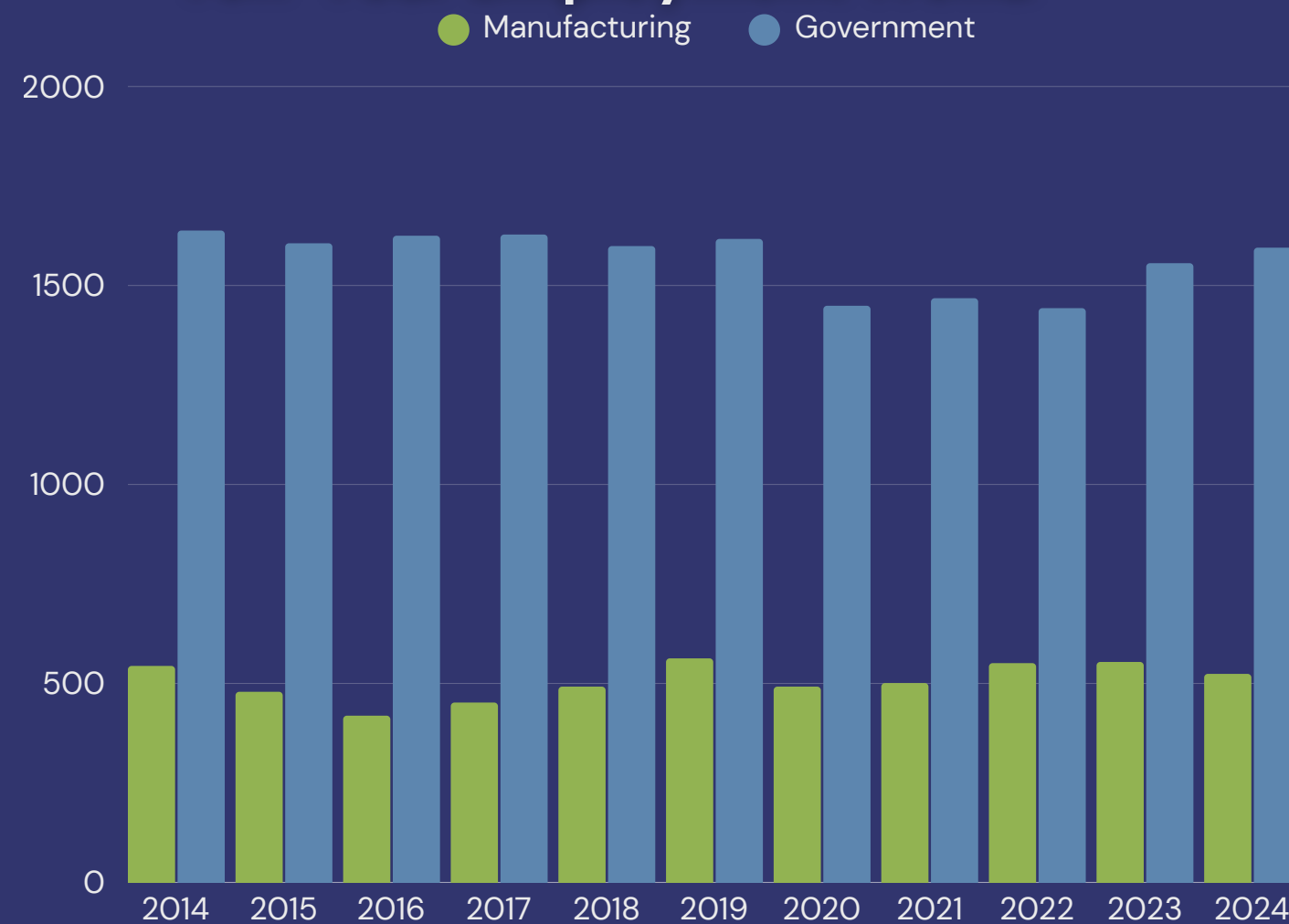
What it is:

The total number of jobs in the Manufacturing and Resource Extraction industries in Baraga County.

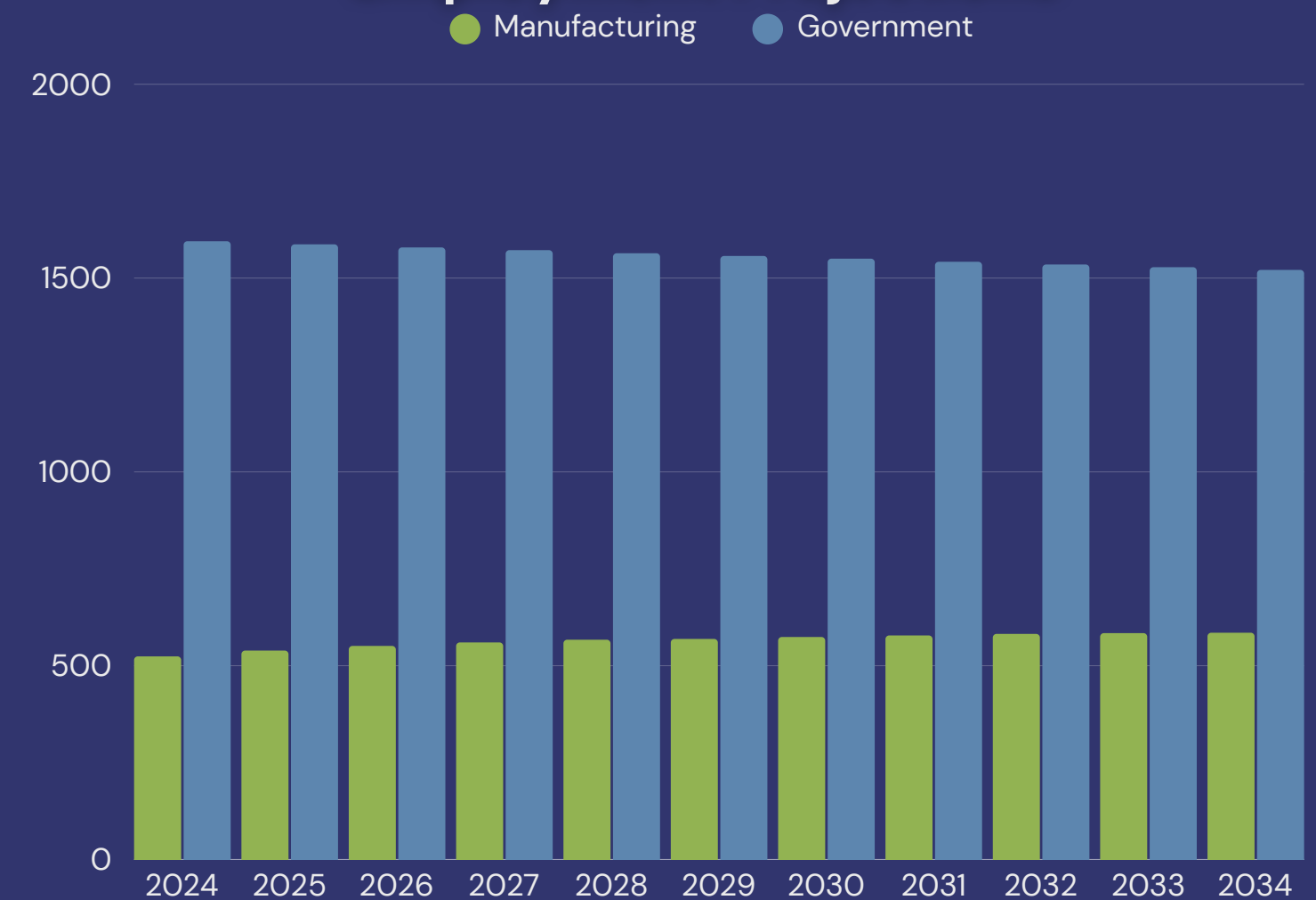
Importance:

These industries significantly contribute to Baraga County's Gross Regional Product, so their economic health helps predict the overall local economy.

Ten-Year Employment Trend



Employment Projections



Source: Lightcast's model, incorporating data from the following agencies: Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives.

Employment by Industry:

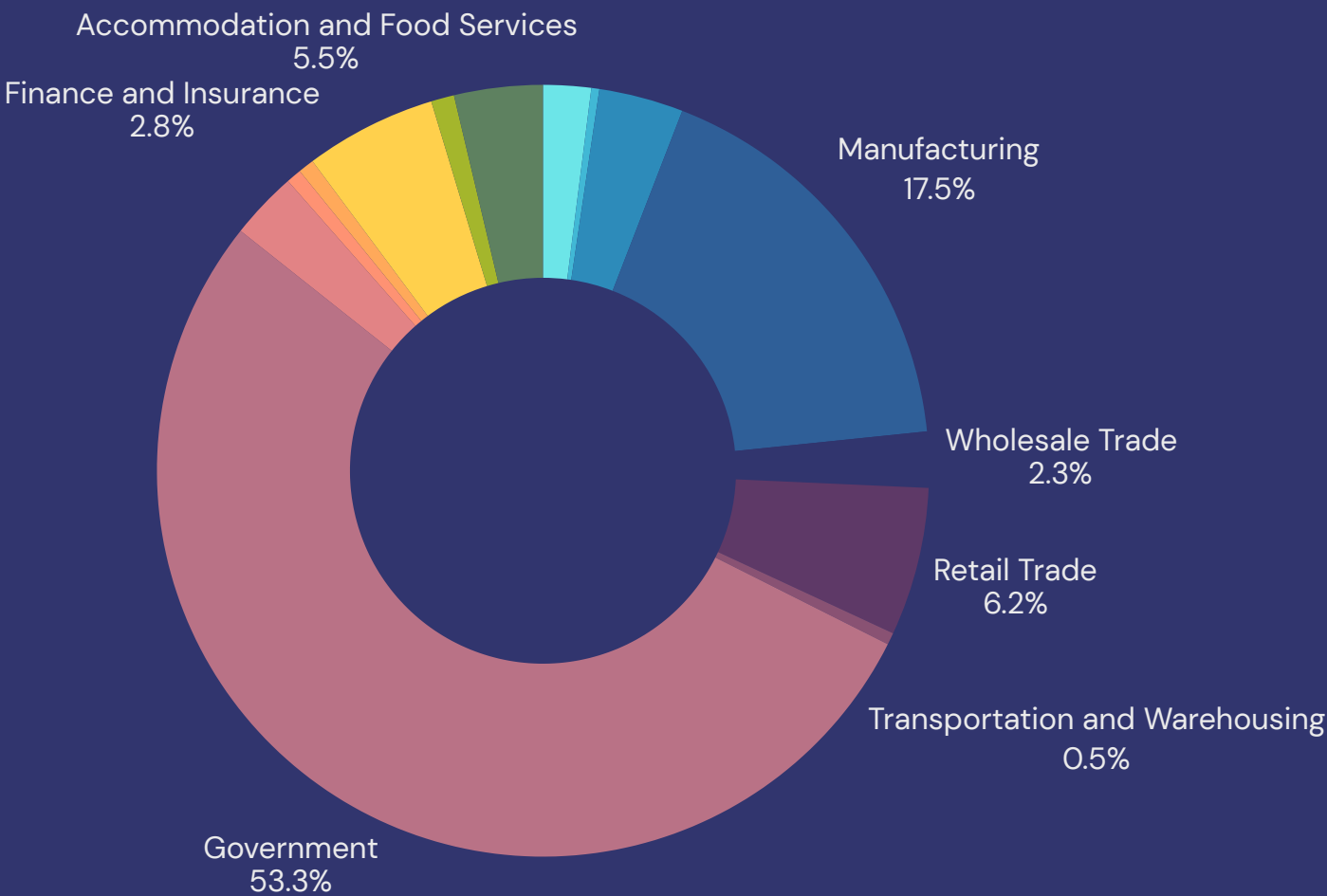
What it is:

The change in the total number of jobs within a specific industry.

Importance:

It reveals which industries are growing or shrinking, providing insight into economic trends and potential challenges in the county.

2024 Employment by Industry



Source: Lightcast’s model, incorporating data from the following agencies: Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives. Industries below 2% are not shown.

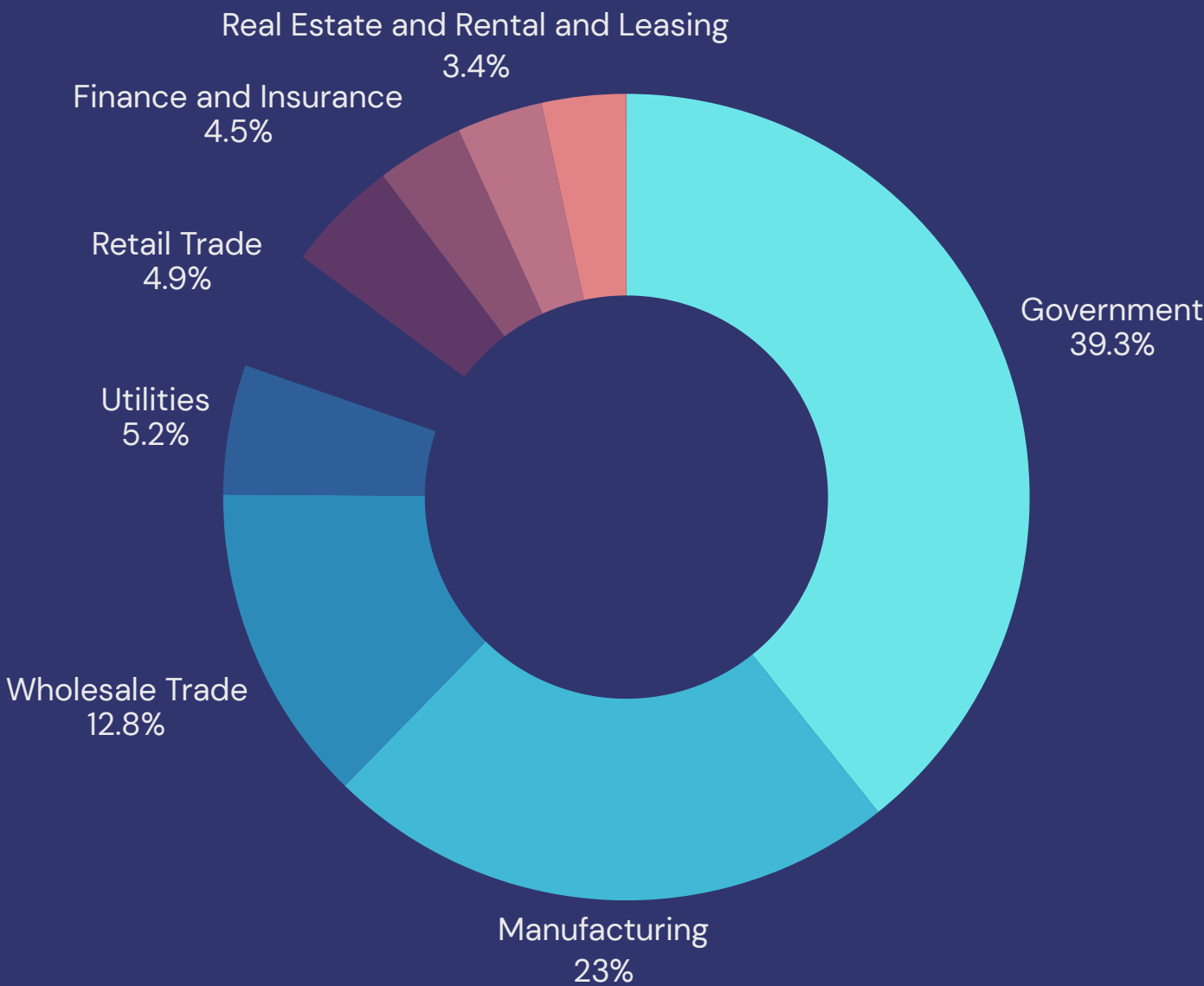
Description	2024 Jobs	2034 Jobs	2024 – 2034 Change	2024 – 2034 % Change
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	60	56	-22	-37%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	10	10	0	0%
Utilities	24	25	3	11%
Construction	106	107	1	1%
Manufacturing	524	539	61	12%
Wholesale Trade	70	76	32	46%
Retail Trade	186	190	21	11%
Transportation and Warehousing	15	15	3	18%
Information	62	64	16	26%
Finance and Insurance	85	90	27	32%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	19	17	-8	-44%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	20	21	4	18%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	0	0	0	0%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	29	31	10	33%
Educational Services	19	17	-7	-38%
Health Care and Social Assistance	111	119	42	38%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	18	20	7	36%
Accommodation and Food Services	165	168	11	6%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	91	89	-4	-5%
Government	1,595	1,587	-74	-5%
Total & Percentage Change	3,208	3,331	123	4%

Gross Regional Product:

What it is:
The total market value of all goods and services produced in the region over the past year.

Importance:
The growth of a region’s GRP over time can be an indicator of the health of that economy. Therefore, an increase in GRP is a positive indicator of growth.

Gross Regional Product by Industry



Industry	2024 GRP	% of Total
Government	\$130,028,234	36%
Manufacturing	\$76,303,666	21%
Wholesale Trade	\$42,394,894	12%
Utilities	\$17,217,744	5%
Retail Trade	\$16,077,650	4%
Finance and Insurance	\$14,983,882	4%
Information	\$11,584,710	3%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	\$11,389,323	3%
Construction	\$11,200,779	3%
Other***	\$32,802,849	9%
Total	\$363,983,730	100%

**Denotes industries with GRP less than \$4,000,000 and is comprised of Mining, Quarrying and Oil and Gas Extraction, Transportation and Warehousing, Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, Management of Companies and Enterprises, Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services, Educational Services, Health Care and Social Assistance, Arts, Entertainment and Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services and Other Services (except Public Administration).

Source: Lightcast’s model incorporates data from the following agencies: Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives.

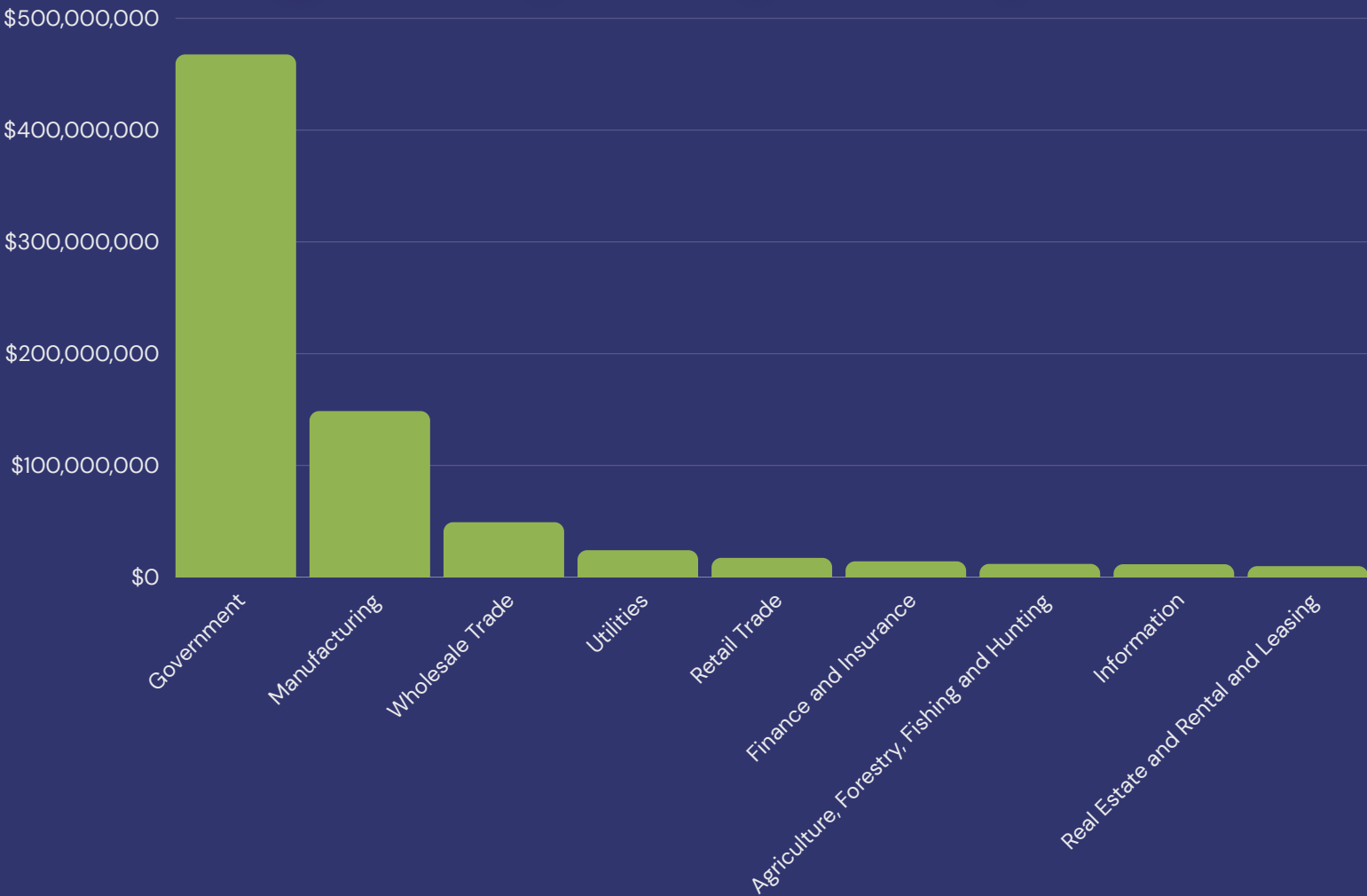
Regional Exports:

What it is:
Regional exports show the amount of money spent by industries located outside the region in exchange for goods or services produced by an industry located within the region.

Importance:
New money being injected into the local economy from outside the region indicates economic growth.

Industry	2024 Exports
Government	\$467,702,359
Manufacturing	\$148,685,104
Wholesale Trade	\$49,263,853
Utilities	\$24,221,925
Retail Trade	\$17,347,032
Finance and Insurance	\$14,273,904
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	\$11,963,926
Information	\$11,663,048
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	\$9,956,606
Construction	\$7,925,363
Other Services (except Public Administration)	\$3,111,794
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	\$1,940,058
Health Care and Social Assistance	\$1,773,430
Transportation and Warehousing	\$1,770,152
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	\$1,356,202
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	\$1,142,716
Accommodation and Food Services	\$966,118
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	\$240,941
Educational Services	\$53,848
Total	\$775,393,650

Regional Exports by Industry



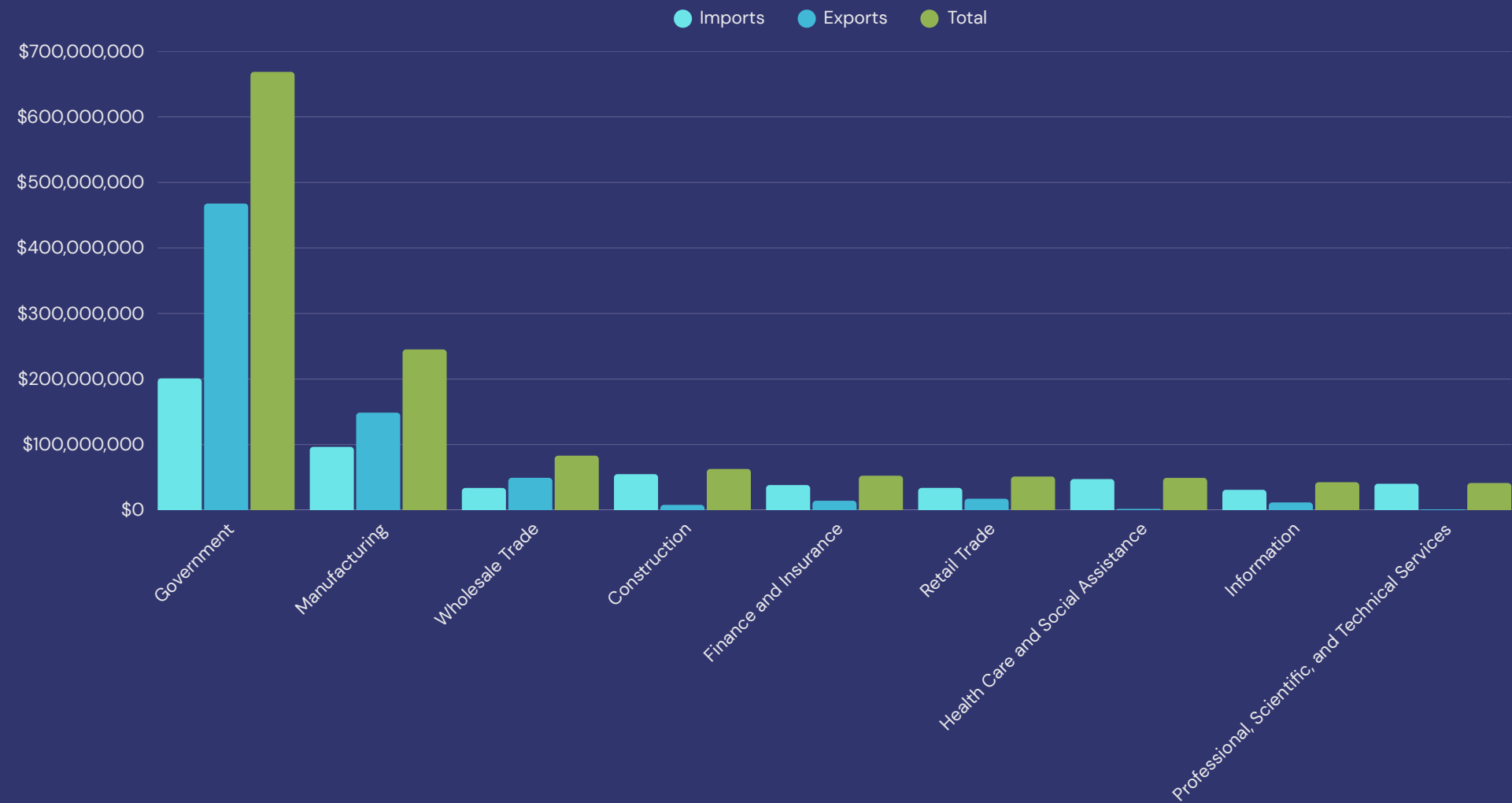
Source: Lightcast’s model, incorporating data from the following agencies: Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives.

Annual Trade:

What it is:
The total value of goods and services imported and exported in the region.

Importance:
Higher trade volumes usually lead to a higher GDP, which boosts the regional economy and increases public funding for services like schools, roads, and parks, enhancing overall quality of life.

Annual Trade by Industry



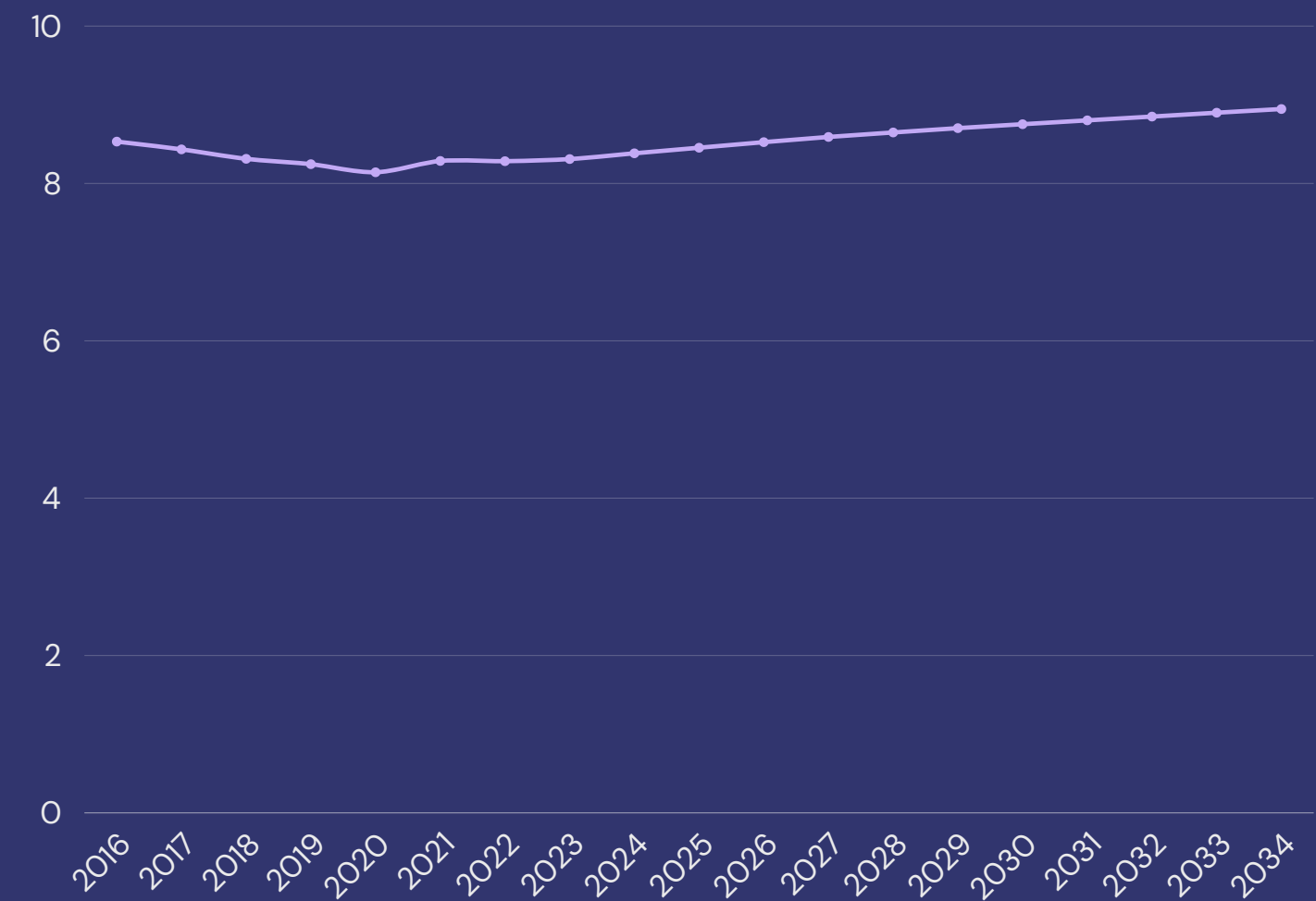
Source: Lightcast’s model, incorporating data from the following agencies: Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives. Totals in trade equals the activity of imports + exports in Marquette County.

Population Forecast:

What it is:
The projected growth of the county population over the next seven years.

Importance:
Population growth often signals a growing economy, with more residents contributing to the tax base and potential for job growth.

Baraga County Population Trend & Projections



Source: Lightcast’s model, incorporating data from the following agencies: Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives.

Year	Baraga County	Upper Peninsula	Michigan
2016	8,532	302,850	10,050,663
2017	8,433	302,009	10,050,663
2018	8,313	300,680	10,050,663
2019	8,245	298,836	10,050,663
2020	8,142	302,374	10,050,663
2021	8,286	301,003	10,050,663
2022	8,283	302,488	10,050,663
2023	8,310	303,123	10,050,663
2024	8,383	305,030	10,050,663
2025	8,454	306,508	10,050,663
2026	8,525	307,906	10,050,663
2027	8,591	309,197	10,050,663
2028	8,648	310,172	10,050,663
2029	8,703	310,891	10,050,663
2030	8,753	311,467	10,050,663
2031	8,802	311,947	10,050,663
2032	8,850	312,285	10,050,663
2033	8,899	312,847	9,996,185
2034	8,946	305,030	9,979,145

Employment Changes:

What it is:

The anticipated increase in the number of jobs in the county.

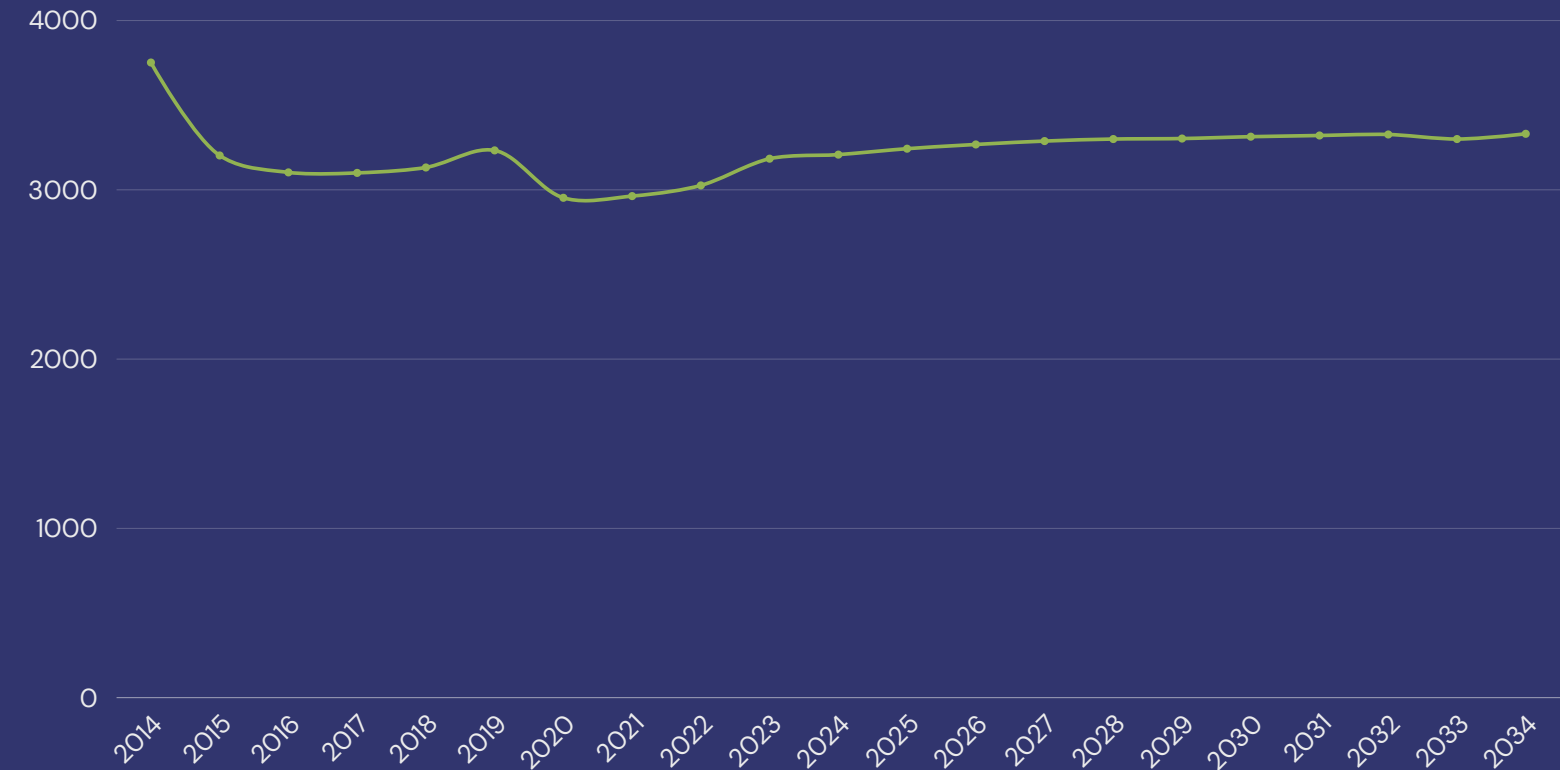
Importance:

More jobs can attract new residents, boosting the local tax base and increasing funding for schools, roads, parks, and public amenities.

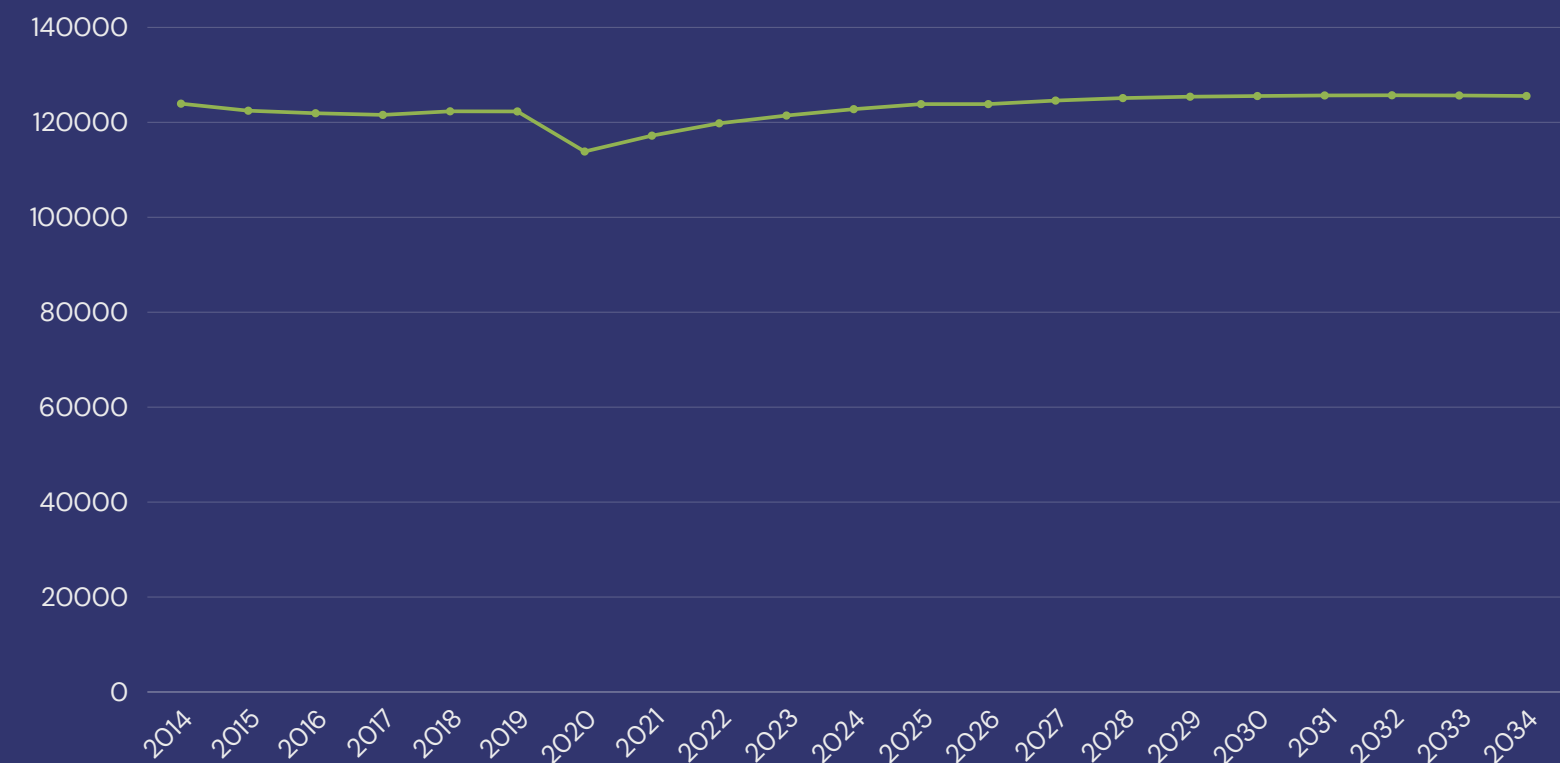
	Baraga County	Upper Peninsula
2024	3,208	122,770
2034	3,331	125,543
Change	123	2,773
Percent Change	4%	3%
Average Earnings Per Job (2022)	\$63,716	\$62,694

Source: Lightcast's model, incorporating data from the following agencies: Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives.

Projected Employment for Baraga County



Projected Employment for the Upper Peninsula



Employment Forecast:

What it is:
The total change in regional job numbers across all industries, compared to similar nearby regions.

Importance:
Comparing trends helps assess the economic health of our region relative to similar areas.

Employment Change 2023–2024

County	Change in Jobs	Percent Change
Baraga County	24	1%
Luce County	33	2%
Oscoda County	-52	-3%
Montmorency County	-7	0%
Alcona County	-14	-1%

Employment Change 2024–2034

County	Change in Jobs	Percent Change
Baraga County	123	4%
Luce County	231	11%
Oscoda County	184	11%
Montmorency County	237	10%
Alcona County	198	11%

Source: Lightcast’s model, incorporating data from the following agencies: Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, Bu-reau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives.

Real Estate:

What it is:
A summary of real estate sales in the county.

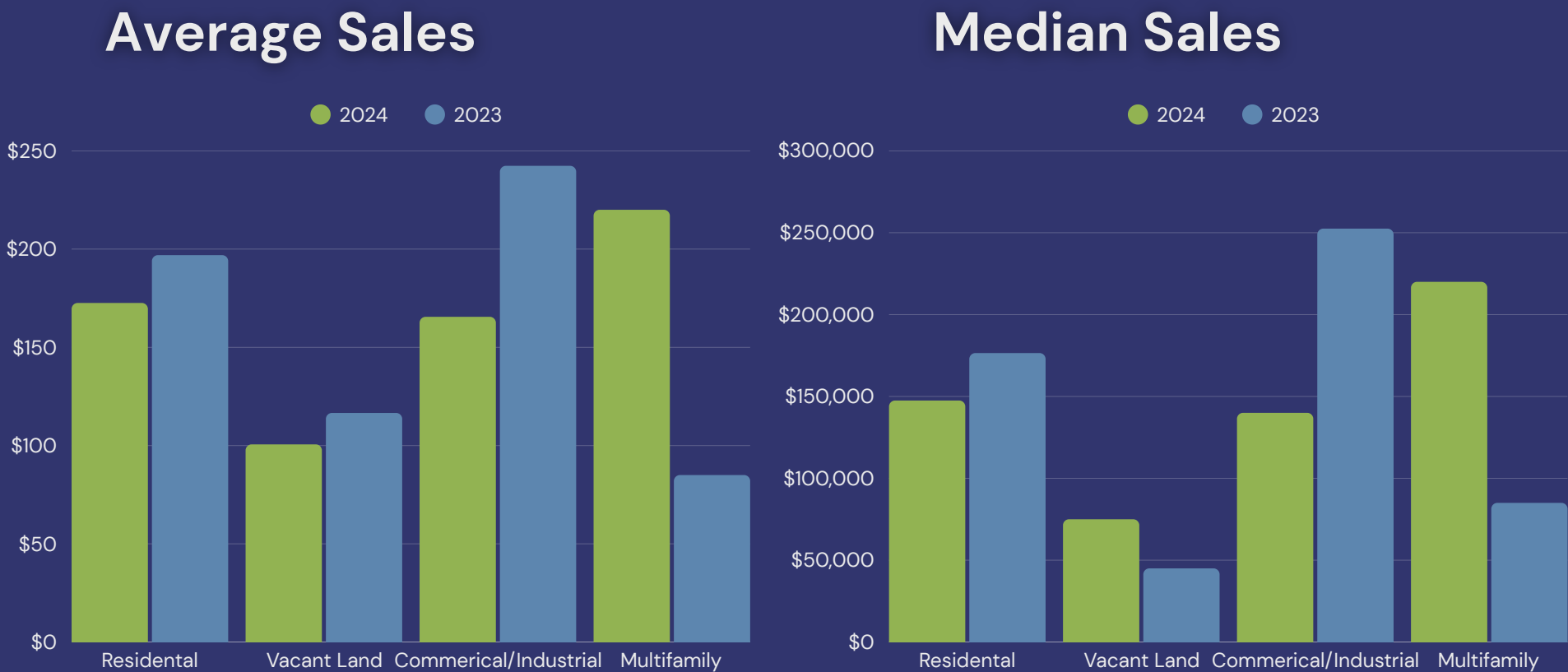
Importance:
Trends in real estate prices and sales volume can reflect community health. Rising prices and sales indicate strong market demand, suggesting more people are moving in and contributing to the local tax base.

2023 Baraga County Real Estate Sales

	QTY Sold	Average Sale	Median Sale	QTY Active
Residential	72	\$196,925	\$176,500	111
Vacant Land	33	\$116,610	\$45,000	82
Commercial/Industrial	4	\$242,375	\$252,500	11
Multifamily	1	\$85,000	\$85,000	2
All Classes	110	\$173,466		206

2024 Baraga County Real Estate Sales

	QTY Sold	Average Sale	Median Sale	QTY Active
Residential	88	\$172,579	\$147,500	129
Vacant Land	77	\$100,601	\$75,000	125
Commercial/Industrial	3	\$165,527	\$140,000	16
Multifamily	1	\$220,000	\$220,000	3
All Classes	169	\$139,940		273



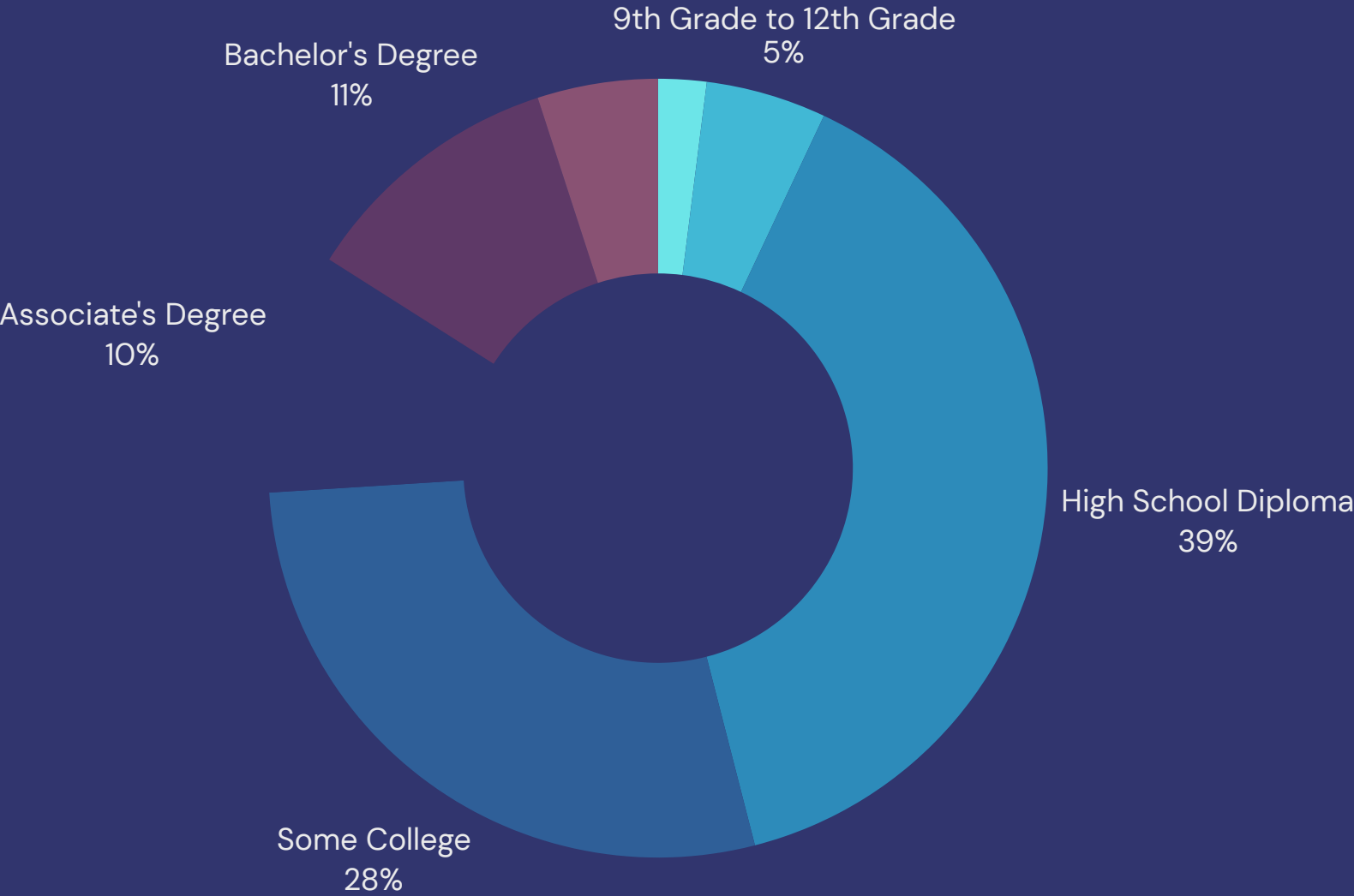
Source: MLS, an independently owned and operated Real Estate Advertising Service Company for Real Estate firms, insurance companies and other real estate related entities.

Educational Attainment:

What it is:
The education levels of individuals over age 25 in the county, based on population estimates.

Importance:
A well-educated workforce attracts new businesses and indicates economic development.

Baraga County Percentage of Population Education Levels



Source: Lightcast’s model, incorporating data from the following agencies: Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives.

Baraga County

Education	% of Population	Population
Less than 9th Grade	2%	120
9th Grade to 12th Grade	5%	330
High School Diploma	39%	2,444
Some College	28%	1,759
Associate's Degree	10%	599
Bachelor's Degree	11%	675
Graduate Degree and Higher	5%	338

United States

Education	% of Population
Less than 9th Grade	5%
9th Grade to 12th Grade	6%
High School Diploma	26%
Some College	19%
Associate's Degree	9%
Bachelor's Degree	22%
Graduate Degree and Higher	14%